LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS

by HARRY POLLITT

WHY THESE STRIKES?

by JIM GARDNER

SIXPENCE JANUARY 1946

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

No. XXVIII. No. 1

CONTENTS

January, 1946

Page

Notes of the Month—*Prospects for* 1946 by R. P. D. 1

I. The Moscow Conference

II. World and Nation

III. Washington Financial Agreements

The Communist Party Congress by HARRY POLLITT 12

Affiliation by TED BRAMLEY 17

Why these Strikes? by JIM GARDNER 23

Palestine by JACK GASTER 27

Book Reviews—

Welcome Revival by R.P.D. 31

Memory of the Means Test by WAL HANNINGTON 32

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

The articles in LABOUR MONTHLY are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York City, U.S.A., as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: United Kingdom, 12 months 7s. Postage paid. Abroad, 8s. from LABOUR MONTHLY, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

A stencilled Discussion Guide to the magazine is available to readers at 3s. a year inclusive of postage.

BOUND VOLUMES

FOR SALE:—TWO SETS BOUND VOLUMES

(1) 1921—1939 inclusive
(2) 1921—1941 inclusive

Two of our readers are offering these for re-sale. The present value of these volumes is between £35 and £40 per set. What will you offer? Write in first place to the L.M. office.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES OF THE MONTH

From 1945 to 1946

WITH 1946 we enter on the first year of peace. What is the prospect? At the opening of 1945 the task was plain and inescapable—to complete the military victory over fascism which was already drawing within view. During the past year that aim has been accomplished with brilliant completeness throughout the world. The power of the Axis is broken; the chief war criminals—in Germany, if not yet in Japan—are in the dock; the nations in Europe have sprung to new life. To look back twelve months is to look back to a past epoch. Twelve months ago Nazism still ruled from Milan to Warsaw; Japan was still unbroken in the Far East; Toryism dominated the British parliament. In the midst of the new problems which beset us today, we do well to remember the immeasurable achievement of the year of victory, 1945. The inspiration of that victory, and of the unity of the peoples which made it possible, points the sure way forward for overcoming the new dangers and difficulties which have arisen, and for accomplishing the plain elementary tasks of 1946: (1) to make the peace enduring by maintaining the unity of the victorious democratic peoples unbroken; (2) to reap the fruits of victory by smashing all remnants of fascist reaction and extending democracy in every country—including the colonial countries, (3) to begin the work of social reconstruction. It will be well to consider more closely what these tasks mean in practice.

No Rosewater Illusions

Peace has been won—but it is not yet settled peace. The Peace Treaties have still to be drawn up. Six months after the end of the war in Europe, and four months after the end of the war in the Far East, the nations are still living in the uneasy interim between war and peace. Lowering clouds hang over the relations of the victor powers. Many millions of men are still under arms, including over three and a half millions for this country. Atom diplomacy bedevils international relations. Military operations continue in Indonesia and China; India and the colonial peoples still seek vainly for freedom. Fascism seeks to lift its head anew, in thinly-veiled disguises, calculating on divisions of the victors and renewed weakness of democracy. The economic prospect is uncertain, with the heavy devastation of war, the shattering of old relations, and the signs of new intensified trade war. Thus there is no room for conventional rosewater optimism about the prospects of 1946. The victory of 1945 was not the end, but the beginning. The great decisions for the whole future now come before us for 1946.

I. The Moscow Conference

President Roosevelt's Warning

In his New Year message at the beginning of the past year the late President Roosevelt, three months before his death, gave a warning which is worth recalling today.

I would express a very serious warning against the poisonous effects of enemy propaganda. The wedge the Germans attempted to drive in West Europe was less dangerous than the wedges they are continually attempting to drive between ourselves and our Allies. There are evil and baseless rumours against the Russians, against the British and against our own American commanders.

The nearer we come to vanquishing our enemies, the more conscious we become of differences between the victors. We

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

must not let those differences divide us or blind us to our more important and continuing interests in winning the war and building the peace.

He gave a further warning which is no less apposite today:—

Perfectionism, no less than isolationism, imperialism or power politics may obstruct the path to international peace.

That is worth recalling at a time when nebulous talk about a world state is paraded as an excuse for opposing and denouncing the unity of the three decisive democratic powers, whose united leadership is the indispensable basis for international peace in the world as it exists today.

Revisionist Offensive

From this standpoint the renewed meeting, at the very close of the year, of the Foreign Secretaries of the three World Powers, represents a hopeful sign, after four months of dangerous weakening. It must be recognised that an ugly point in the international situation had been reached. The second half of 1945 was unworthy of the first. The stale wisdom of the cynics that in the hour of victory every alliance breaks asunder seemed to be reaching confirmation. It was as if the ghosts of Hitler and Goebbels, in mocking triumph after death, presided over the councils of the Western allies to bequeath to them their legacy —in the spirit of their final declaration of capitulation on the West to fulfil the war against the East—for the unity of "Western civilisation" and "Western Europe" against the Soviet Union and Communism and every form of popular anti-fascist democracy, denounced as "Bolshevism." The unity of the Big Three was decried as a dictatorship. A flood of foul anti-Soviet slander was let loose. "We must help Germany to get back on her feet," became the fashionable watchword. The London Conference broke up in deadlock. Bevin thundered against the Soviet Union as "coming across the throat of the British Empire." Every aspiration of democracy in Europe from the Balkans to France was resisted. On this foul soil Neo-fascism sprouted in Europe, notably in Greece by the power of British arms, and in Italy under Anglo-American military protection. Mosleyism raised its head anew in Britain without let or hindrance.

Retreat from Three Power Unity ?

On November 23 Bevin declared in the House of Commons:—

I cannot accept the view that my policy or the policy of His Majesty's Government should be based entirely on the Big Three.

On November 29 President Truman went further:

President Truman stated this morning that the United States was seeking through diplomatic negotiations a revision of the Potsdam Agreement.

Mr. Truman was then asked whether he thought another "Big Three" meeting was needed to accomplish the American aim, and he replied firmly that he did not.

The President went on to express the opinion that probably no further "Big Three" meeting would be required. He wishes to see the United Nations Organisation, now being formed, take over and do its job (*Times*, November 30, 1945).

Such was the critical point of danger reached only one week before the announcement that, on the proposal of the United States Secretary of State, Byrnes, Bevin and Byrnes would travel to Moscow for a new Three Power meeting.

Back to Three Power Unity?

Against this background the decision in December to hold a renewed meeting of the three Foreign Secretaries in Moscow may be regarded as a first step back to sanity. What led to the change? It is significant that the initiative came from the United States—at the same moment as the final hard bargaining of the loan to Britain. Pressure of public opinion, alarmed at the deadlock of the Lon-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

don Conference, had made itself felt both in Britain and the United States. In contrast to the irresponsible complacency with which the Anglo-American representatives had accepted the deadlock and adjourned the Conference in the face of Soviet proposals to continue, the Western diplomats later had begun to realise the senseless blind alley in which they were involving themselves. Either they meant war or they did not. If they did not (and only the more hopelessly intoxicated victims of atom bomb cordial were chanting "Since eventually, why not now?"), here was no sense in refusing to negotiate, and remaining wrapped up in self-righteous pride in a corner, hurling objurgations. It might sound very fine on the platform and in newspaper articles to proclaim the United Nations Organisation as the grand "democratic" alternative to "Big Three domination." But with the date of the Assembly in January approaching, what prospect was there of any success for that Assembly if the three leading Powers were to be revealed at loggerheads?

Small Nations' View

A further factor was that the smaller European nations, whose supposed interests had been so eloquently championed by the publicists of Anglo-American power-politics as a reason for denouncing "Big Three dictatorship," were beginning to reveal that they held a very different viewpoint. Just as the plans for the Western Bloc have been encountering heavy weather in face of the official repudiation from a whole series of Western European countries, as well as from the results of the French elections, so equally the attempts to stir up the smaller European nations as pawns against Crimea, Berlin and Three-Power unity met with fiasco. On December 16 the *Observer* was compelled to record:

A curious change seems to have occurred in the attitude of the smaller nations towards the Areopagus in Moscow. On the occasion of previous Big Three meetings the spokesmen of the smaller nations used to utter angry protests at the dictatorship of the giants. This time their tone is rather different. The meeting has been received with something like a sigh of relief in most European capitals.

The reasons for this changed attitude are not far to seek. The rift between the Big Three has been producing an intolerable tension all over the Continent. Politicians who had hoped that the rivalry between the Powers would create more elbow-room for smaller nations have discovered that they were wrong.

In the atmosphere of acute rivalry between the Powers, the small nations are little more than kicked balls. Each kick from one of the mighty rivals upsets the internal balance and delays recovery. Things have now drifted in this direction far enough to make the small nations anxiously pray for agreement between the Big Three.

Guarding Against Relapses

It would be premature to assume that the holding of the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in Moscow already means either that the unity of the Three Powers is assured or that even the principle of the necessity of their united leadership as the foundation for stable and lasting world peace is recognised. The tendency still finds expression which would seek to treat the Moscow meeting as a final concession in the sense of a last meeting of the Big Three. Thus the *Observer* on December 9, interpreting British policy:

The test of the meeting, it is felt, will be judged by the extent to which the Russians agree to allow the emphasis to be shifted from the Big Three to wider groupings of the Powers in the discussion and settlement of international issues.

On the other hand, *The Times* has conducted a strongly reasoned campaign to show the necessity of the united leadership of the three World

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Powers as the pivot of world peace. And the American Secretary of State went out of his way to refer to the Moscow meeting as the forerunner of future regular tripartite meetings in accordance with the Crimea Agreement:

Mr. Byrnes laid special emphasis on the fact that the approaching meeting was neither a peace conference nor a Foreign Ministers' Council; it was merely another quarterly tripartite contact of the kind proposed at Yalta and since then made at San Francisco, Potsdam and London. He confirmed the report that at Moscow he would ask that the next gathering three months from now should be held in Washington. (*Times*, December 12, 1945.)

II. World and Nation

World State Boom

One of the features of the debate on foreign affairs at the end of November, following Attlee's visit to Washington, and preceding the Moscow meeting, was the united Tory-Labour Eden-Bevin chorus of denunciation of national sovereignty and proclamation of devotion to the aim of a World State or supernational government. In the name of this high aim the offensive was launched equally against the Three Power principle and against the San Francisco agreement on the veto. Mr. Eden opened the ball with the declaration.

Every succeeding scientific discovery makes greater nonsense of old-time conceptions of sovereignty. It is yet true that national sentiment is still as strong as ever, and here and there it is strengthened by this further complication, the different conceptions of forms of government and different conceptions what words mean, words like "freedom" and "democracy."

So, in spite of some stirrings, the world has not so far been ready to abandon, or even really to modify, its old conceptions of sovereignty. But there have been some stirrings. There was the Briand plan after the last war for the Federation of Europe.

For the life of me, I have been unable to see, and am still unable to see, any final solution which will make the world safe for atomic power save that we all abate our present ideas of sovereignty.

World Parliament?

Mr. Bevin declared his "hearty agreement" with Mr. Eden and went one further. Referring to Eden's proposal, he said:

His remedy, with which I heartily agree, the right honourable gentleman called the surrender of sovereignty. I do not want to use that word.

He echoed the nostalgic regrets for the "Pan-Europe" plans of Briand and Stresemann which paved the way for Hitler's "New Europe":

Mention was made of the attempt of M. Briand to form a Federation of Europe. This is a project which is very near to the hearts of Social Democrats.

Soaring forward in imaginative flight he boldly sketched out the aim of a World Parliament:

Therefore, when you turn from all the things you have built up—the League of Nations or your constitutions—I feel we are driven relentlessly along this road: the necessity of a new study for the purpose of creating a World Assembly, elected directly from the people of the world as a whole, for whom the Governments who form the United Nations are responsible, and who in fact make the world law which they, the people, will then accept and be morally bound and willing to carry it out. For it will be by their votes that the power will have been derived, and the taxation provided, and it will be for their direct representatives to carry it out.

It was in the same speech that he declared that Government policy would not in future be regarded bound to be based on the Big Three.

Enthusiasm on the Left

This Eden-Bevin crusade appears to have swept the Liberal-Labour benches off their feet. The "sensation" created by Eden's repudiation

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of national sovereignty is described by a parliamentary correspondent:

Astonished Labour members could hardly, as the phrase goes, believe their ears. For some moments they remained silent. It seemed incredible that a Conservative leader should at last be accepting the doctrine of supernational government.

Then as Mr. Eden went on, they found themselves giving one great cheer after another. It was noticeable that cheers came only from Labour and Liberal members. Conservatives were silent—though Mr. Churchill produced several emphatic "Hear, hears." (*News-Chronicle*, November 23, 1945.)

The *New Statesman and Nation* (1.12.45) found its faith in Bevin justified:

When Mr. Bevin became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, we prophesied that he would show a broad imaginative grasp and stress the economic and social welfare of peoples rather than the political interests of States. We stuck to our view that he was "feeling his way" to a new foreign policy, even when he seemed in his first speeches to follow the narrow road of Foreign Office orthodoxy. Mr. Bevin's speech of last week has confirmed our judgment. For the first time a national leader has stated in plain terms the absolute necessity of a world State.

Even the hypercritical Laski purred with approval (*Forward*, 1.12.45):

There are times in the history of the world when an idealistic project, such as Mr. Bevin assumed, may be far more realistic than the hard-boiled attention to realism which so often ends in the conviction that nothing can be done.

Tribune (30.11.45) vanished into a delirium of adulatory ecstasy:

Ernest Bevin's speech in the House of Commons last week marked a turning-point which future historians may well describe as the moment at which Britain publicly broke the continuity of her foreign policy.

Cooling Thoughts

Before throwing our hats in the air with the merry throng of worshippers at the Eden-Bevin-Churchill shrine, it may be well to consider the reasons why at the present moment the attack on national sovereignty and call for supernational federation has become such a fashionable theme in reactionary quarters (not only Eden and Churchill, but the old prophet of Empire, Smuts; the "Round Table" theorist of imperialism, Curtis, in his book *World War, Its Cause and Cure*; the die-hard hot-gospeller of empire, Amery, in his recent London University address, etc.) The breach with the continuity of Tory policy may exist in the imagination of *Tribune* sycophants, but obviously does not coincide with the views of Eden, with whom Bevin "heartily agrees", or with Churchill's lusty "hear hears". In the week following Bevin's speech the Tories moved a vote of censure on the Government. They dug up everything they could think of to abuse and complain and find fault. But they made one exception—foreign policy. Lest there should be any misunderstanding, one of their Front Bench speakers in the debate, Harold Macmillan, explicitly stated:

The new Foreign Secretary and the new Prime Minister were loyally carrying out the policy they supported in the old War Cabinet. On these matters they were talking sense. (House of Commons, December 5.)

This in a Vote of Censure debate in which every stick was being used to belabour the dog. So much for *Tribune's* peculiar delusion of the end of the continuity of foreign policy on November 23.

A Few Questions

On the proposals for a World Parliament and the end of national sovereignty it is not necessary to spend much time. A few practical questions would expose the complete insincerity of such proposals at the present moment, which have in fact a very different purpose from the assumed idealistic aim. Does Mr. Bevin stand for the principle of "One

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

man, one vote''? In that case, is he prepared to accept and obey the laws laid down by a parliament in which Indians and Chinese will be 40 per cent. of the members, and Britain and the Dominions 3 per cent.? Is he prepared to accept the sovereignty of an assembly, in which the Soviet Union, India, China and the colonial peoples will have the absolute majority, while the Anglo-American imperialists will be reduced to an insignificant minority group? If he has reached such a high degree of international democratic consciousness as to be able honestly to answer ''Yes'' to this question, why does he boggle at such a trifling matter as granting democracy to India? If he is ready—in theory—to grant India the right to elect one fifth of the representatives of a world assembly to whose laws he will bow, why does he in practice refuse India the right at home to elect a constituent assembly by universal suffrage for the more modest purpose of governing themselves?

The Gnat and the Camel

Of what avail the high-sounding professions of ultimate world democratic ideals, which carry no practical obligation whatever, if the most modest instalment of democracy in practice is resisted? Is it not obvious that in that case the high-sounding profession is no idealistic delusion, but only a deception to serve as a alibi for opposing the unity of the three democratic World Powers, which is the necessary present path for world democratic advance? If Mr. Bevin is so anxious to divest himself of national sovereignty, why not make a modest beginning in practice and hand over the decision on the future of India to an international commission composed of representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, China and the Indonesian Republic? But it is only necessary to recall the difficulties which followed the despatch and reports of President Roosevelt's personal envoy to India, William Phillips, to realise what a jealousy of sovereignty and absolute arbitrary decision there is here. Empires are always intolerant of the claims of their subject peoples to national sovereignty. And the apologists of empire never tire of pointing out the ''backwardness'' of subject peoples in clinging to the ''obsolete'' national idea, and of proclaiming their own advanced supernational outlook above all vulgar outworn national superstitions.

Pedigree of the World State

It is worth recalling that the conception of the World State derives in the development of political thought from the tradition of the Roman Empire of slavery and exploitation. In its modern form it was put forward first as a conservative conception by a Roman Catholic priest, in the middle of the eighteenth century, in the famous ''*Project of Perpetual Peace*'' of the Abbé Saint-Pierre, which was in fact a proposal for a European Holy Alliance to maintain monarchs on their thrones. Abandoned in the period of bourgeois national expansion, it reappears in the period of imperialism, and expresses in political form the conception of ultra-imperialism or the single world trust unifying the finance-capitalist oligarchies in the domination and enslavement of the entire world. Behind the schemes of Pan-Europe, Hitler's *New Europe*, Federal Union, Anglo-American fusion, etc. this reactionary striving expresses itself. To the cosmopolitan financiers of the type of the Zaharoffs, Deterdings, Sassoons, Kreugers and Schachts, the Rand millionaires, or the ruling Anglo-American scions of improvished English aristocracy and Chicago pork butchers, equally at

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

home in Park Lane or Miami, the Riviera or Cairo, the directors simultaneously of British and German trusts and international cartels, the old national frontiers and certificates of national citizenship have become indeed out of date meaningless symbols.

The Bourgeoisie and the Nation

This cosmopolitanism of finance-capital has nothing in common with proletarian internationalism, which is based on the recognition of the full historical role of the nation, and which fights for the freedom and equality of all nations and the brotherhood of nations. In its early progressive days the bourgeoisie represented and led the nation. But in the period of capitalist decay, of imperialism, of the advancing socialist revolution, and of fascism, the big bourgeoisie has long said farewell to national patriotism. The modern cosmopolitan finance-capitalist ruling sections know no patriotism save their pocket. The modern experience of the interventionist wars, of the White emigrés, of fascism and Munichism and upper class quislings and collaborators, has abundantly shown that, if once their material interests are threatened by the advance of the working class, they are ready to betray their country, to open the gates to the invader, to lead foreign armies against their country and to serve as puppets of a foreign ruler, provided they can thereby maintain their class privileges. These are the sure signs of a dying class.

The Working Class and the Nation

In contrast, the working class, as the ascending class, takes over the leadership of the nation, at the same time as the bourgeoisie moves to the position of the enemy of the nation. True patriotism and class-consciousness merge in a common stream of struggle; the old pseudo-patriotism and jingoism of reactionary flag-wagging and enslavement of nations is exposed. The same modern period of imperialism and fascism has revealed the tremendous revolutionary force that resides in the nation. It was the national resistance movements, led by the working class in the forefront of the struggle, which broke Hitler's Pan-Europe. If the Communist Parties have leapt forward to the first political place in a whole series of European countries during this period, they have leapt forward as the leaders of the nation, who best understood and were most capable, alike in political ability, courage and strength of mass organisation, to lead the nation and defend the true interests of the nation. The European nations, having thus dearly won their freedom, will not cheaply sell it, even for a pound of spam, to the supernational Anglo-American finance-capitalists and their upper class collaborators.

International Co-operation

In the whole world of imperialism it is the national struggle for freedom, from India and Indonesia to Azerbaijan and Nigeria, that is shattering the old structure and preparing the new. In this national struggle the young Communist Parties of the colonial countries, the leaders of the working class, are playing their foremost part as patriots and fighters for the nation. This national struggle for freedom will be carried through to victory all over the world. Only on this basis of the ending of national oppression, through the freedom and equality of all nations, will the path open to the future unity of world humanity. Present talk of supernational world unification on the basis of imperialism is reactionary deception. In the present transitional period the path of international co-operation for the maintenance of peace must lie through the partnership and joint action of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the sovereign democratic nations who have won the victory over fascism, with the decisive responsibility of united leadership in the hands of the three World Powers, the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain.

III. Washington Financial Agreements

A Difficult Vote

It is in the light of these immediate aims of practical international co-operation, no less than of the acute problems of the British economic situation, that the complex and controversial question of the United States loan and the Washington financial agreements needs to be considered. The reasons why the Government and the majority in parliament judged it necessary to accept the agreements reached, despite openly expressed dissatisfaction and concern over certain of the terms imposed, received plain expression in the debate. First, it was felt that, in face of the extremely difficult world economic position of Britain, after the abrupt ending of Lease-Lend, and with the heavy prospective deficit of payments for several years ahead, there was no practical alternative seen to ensure the necessary supplies during the transitional period of reconstruction to a sounder economic basis. Second, the positive features of the ratification of the Bretton Woods Agreement and the projected International Trade Conference were recognised as steps towards the aim of a measure of international economic co-operation; and in relation to this aim even a partially unsatisfactory agreement was better than no agreement. Third, the actual vote and division in the House of Commons became in practice a division between the supporters of international economic co-operation on the lines of the Bretton Woods Agreement and the most reactionary opponents of Bretton Woods and protagonists of a closed Empire bloc.

Political Background

Having said this, it is necessary to recognise that these agreements, expressing the outcome of prolonged hard bargaining between the representatives of two imperialist Powers (there was no question of the Labour Government playing here any special role different from any other Government—Halifax, Keynes, and Bridges were all non-Labour representatives), with the overwhelming dominant economic superiority on the side of the United States fall very short of the aims of international economic co-operation and contain many dangerous features. It is not possible to treat these agreements solely in their economic context without reference to their political background. At the time when the Bretton Woods Agreement was drawn up a year and a half ago, it was drawn up in a different political situation from the present. It was drawn up as a part of, and against the political background of a general programme of international co-operation under the joint leadership of the three Powers, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. The Agreement was signed by the representatives of forty-four nations, including the Soviet Union.

Changes since Bretton Woods

Since then the international political situation has been modified. Co-operation of the three World Powers has been weakened. There have been marked tendencies towards an exclusive Anglo-American bloc counterposed to the Soviet Union. Since the death of Roosevelt, the United States has moved to an increasingly open

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

aggressive imperialist world role, both politically and economically. Reaction in Britain, alongside a violent anti-Soviet campaign, has sought in every way to draw closer the links with United States finance-capital, especially since the return of a Labour majority in parliament. The Anglo-American financial agreements need to be seen in relation to this situation. Unlike the Bretton Woods Agreement, the proposal for an International Trade Conference appears as an Anglo-American proposal, independently of the Soviet Union. The agreements carry the danger of increasing the financial and economic dependence of Britain on the United States, with all the political consequences, both domestically and internationally, which could flow from such a situation.

Economic Independence

Do the terms of the loan and of the agreed proposals for the International Trade Conference restrict the independent control of economic policy by the Labour Government? This is the crucial question. The answer to this question turns upon the interpretation of a number of clauses in the agreements; and it may be that only the test of practical experience will finally demonstrate how far Sir Stafford Cripps was correct in his confident claim that the Government will remain "absolute master" of its policy, or how far the gloomier prognostications of many expert critics may prove justified. The requirements with regard to the convertibility of sterling within one year of the effective date of the loan agreement, the limitations of exchange controls and removal of restrictions on payments and transfers for current transactions, the limitations on respect of import controls and state trading, can have and are intended to have a very considerable influence on Government economic policy in a way which will run counter to the requirements of planned control of foreign trade. On the other hand, there are so many conditional factors in the provisions, as well as escape clauses, that the practical operation remains a matter of controversy, and may continue the subject of inter-governmental controversy after the operation of the agreement has begun.

Co-operation or Trade War

In the parliamentary and press controversy the case for the agreements has been widely presented on the basis of the desirability of international economic co-operation. Such a result may flow from the agreements, if certain other things are done, if the possibilities of the International Bank for Reconstruction are used in a positive way, etc. But such a result of international economic co-operation is not by any means automatically contained in the agreements; the actual result may be very different. The proposals for submission to the International Trade Conference deal at length with re-commendations for removing or diminishing restrictions on trade; for the elimination of preferences and reduction of tariffs; and for raw material commodity agreements to ensure free access and possible restriction in special cases of a "burdensome surplus." All these are measures for greater freedom of trade. They are by no means measures for positive co-operation in the economic field.

Positive Co-operation

The fact is that the formula of "international co-operation" in the economic field is often used in two different senses, corresponding to different economic conceptions. On the one hand, it is used as indicated in the provisions of the second part of the Bretton Woods Agreement for the establishment of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as in the Hot Springs

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

recommendations, etc., to denote joint action in the promotion of schemes for international economic development, raising the productive and technical level in devastated or backward areas of the world and thus assisting the raising of the standard of living and world prosperity. This is the only positive sense of international economic co-operation. This aim corresponds to the general economic conceptions of planned development.

Freeing the World Market

But the other sense uses "international co-operation" to denote international agreement to remove restrictive barriers and promote the free flow of world trade or multilateral trading. This aim corresponds to the general economic conception of "free" competitive enterprise. It is the latter conception which entirely dominates the Washington Agreements. They express the dominant aim of United States big business interests to open up the entire world market for American exports in a "free for all" and "let the best man win." It is here that the superior bargaining strength of American imperialism has imposed conditions with which the existing British economy, in its weakened condition, may not find it easy to cope.

Fulfilment Question

Hence arises the serious question whether the conditions of the loan agreement can in practice be fulfilled, or may not lead, in the absence of very drastic reorganisation of British economy and changed world conditions, to default and new difficulties of the world economic situation. The White Paper of Statistical Material calculates on a prospective deficit in the British balance of payments during the three years 1946-48 of "£1,250 million or even higher," with "some more modest deficiency in the next two years." The credit of £937 million would not actually cover this. Yet at the end of the five year period, not only would a full balance of payments have to be achieved (which was not achieved even in the years before the war, with a much higher investment and shipping income, as well as the artificial props of preferences and the sterling area), but an additional £35 million a year would need to be available for interest and repayment. This would require a more than 75 per cent. increase in exports, to be achieved in the full blast of competition in a free world market, in face of the superior economic strength of American production. The offensive which big business interests in this country will endeavour to conduct, on the basis of these figures, against wages and social services is obvious. It is not surprising that economists such as H. D. Henderson have declared default to be inevitable, or that the *Economist*, while regarding acceptance as inevitable, reached the conclusion that "the probability is all too great that the decision will be regretted on one side of the Atlantic, and its principles reversed on the other, before many more Congresses will have been elected" (8.12.45). There is certainly no room for illusions as to the gravity of the problems raised by the terms of this agreement.

"No Alternative"

Nor should the formula of "no alternative" be too easily accepted as constituting alone sufficient grounds for the acceptance of the agreements. There is always a balance of alternatives to be weighed in every situation; and the absolute dogmatic formula of "no alternative" is the classic formula of capitulation. It is obvious that if, for example, the United States had sought to impose such a condition on the loan as that the Labour Government must abandon all schemes for nationalisation,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no one would have dared to say "no alternative", "we must accept." There would have been only one answer—Never. The alternative, however onerous, disagreeable and difficult, would have been faced; and the endeavour made to build up the best possible basis on the fullest use of Britain's resources and development of close economic arrangements with the rest of the world, with the Soviet Union, the new European Governments, the Dominions and the colonial peoples, until such time as the United States, in face of world resistance to such attempted domination, was compelled to make a more reasonable offer. The acceptance, in other words, was based, not on an absolute absence of alternatives, but on a judgment of the balance of alternatives in relation to the terms proposed. It is all the more important that the breathing space provided by the loan should not lead to relaxation of effort in the fullest development of Britain's productive resources, as the essential basis of economic independence, and the closest development of economic relations with the Soviet Union, the new European democracies, the Dominions, a free India and the colonial peoples.

Practical Conclusions

The all-important present question is no longer the controversy over the loan agreements, but the practical steps which need to be taken, following the acceptance of the agreements. During the short breathing space provided by the loan it is now all the more indispensable to review and speed up the entire economic programme of the Government; to press forward the drastic reorganisation of British economy, and especially the reorganisation and modernisation of the basis industries, coal, transport, iron and steel and textiles; to embark on a comprehensive programme of large-scale agricultural development in place of the present restriction and sinking back which has been allowed to take place; to cut down the enormous mass of luxury parasitic expenditure, including to reduce the burdens of excessive compensation for nationalised industries, and, on the basis of the full maintenance of controls of commodities, prices and investments, to ensure the planned development of maximum production, full use of manpower and State-organised development of foreign trade.

New Directives Needed

Only along these lines, involving very much more drastic steps than those yet indicated by the Government can the necessary reorganisation of British economy in the existing conditions be effected in such a way as to ensure the maintenance and improvement of standards of living of the people, in place of the menace of a general offensive on living standards. Along with this must go the necessary decisive changes in foreign policy which will end reactionary costly adventures to prop up reaction abroad, as in Greece or Indonesia, renew the partnership of the three World Powers in leadership of the United Nations, free India and extend close economic and political relations with all progressive peoples for international economic development.

A Guide to Action

It is in relation to these new developments, which have followed the ending of the Communist Congress, that the conclusions of that Congress take on increased practical importance. The Labour Government cannot but be aware of the wide concern which is felt among its supporters and the people generally over the signs of drift in many fields, and especially in regard to the necessity for an overall economic plan for the speediest conversion to peace production, re-equipment of industry, targets of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production, fullest use of man-power and a national wages policy. We do not want to see the credits wasted in order to maintain millions of the most active workers under arms for the purposes of a reactionary foreign policy. Figures of unemployment have risen to one-third of a million. Formal measures of nationalisation or admittedly useful social measures cannot replace this vital necessity for effective economic planning. The fate of the Labour Government will be above all decided in the economic field. We shall need the full strength of a united labour movement to cope with the heavy problems before us. On all these questions the Report of the Communist Congress now published presents concrete proposals which are worthy of careful consideration and which are summarised in the article of Harry Pollitt in this number.

R.P.D.

December 17, 1945.

The Communist Party Congress

by HARRY POLLITT

MANY new and important changes have taken place both at home and abroad since the closing of the eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party at the end of November. They all confirm the general analysis of the situation that was made then and emphasise the correctness of the policy advanced as the best way forward for the British people.

It was the most democratic working-class Congress yet held in Britain. It had been preceded by a two-months political discussion in which all members and organisations of the Communist Party exercised their right to examine the work of the Executive Committee since the seventeenth Congress, to point out mistakes and weaknesses and to make their positive contribution to the policy the eighteenth Congress should formulate.

The content of the 317 resolutions sent in for the Congress Agenda by the District and Branch organisations gives some idea of the wide range of subjects exercising the minds of the membership. These resolutions were roughly divided as follows: 18 on foreign policy, 16 on housing, 15 on demobilisation, 12 on industrial relations, 9 on wages, 4 on old age pensions, 4 on education, 3 on coal, 3 on the role of the Communist Party. Sixty-two dealt with organisational questions, 22 with Marxist education, 15 with party propaganda, 14 with colonial and Indian questions, 14 were on methods of electing the Executive Committee, 14 on miscellaneous resolutions covering various issues from cotton to the potteries industries, 11 on affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, 11 on issues covered in the Executive resolution on "Transition from War to Peace," 11 on mistakes of the Executive Committee since the last Congress, 10 on atomic bomb, 8 on Palestine and race hatred, 6 on B.B.C., 6 on the role of women, 5 on the *Daily Worker*, 4 on youth issues, 3 on Scottish affairs, 2 on Welsh affairs and 2 on local government.

All this represented something new and unprecedented in working-class conferences. It blew sky high all the silly slanders of a party "under foreign control," of a party which "has no mind of its own," or of a party that "had no say in the making of policy," for it revealed a serious and independent study of events at home and abroad of which any party in any part of the world would be

PRODUCED 2005 BY MEDIA.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proud. It all helped the Executive Committee to present a political report to the Congress that reflected real collective thought and leadership on the part of its entire membership.

Any serious consideration of the Congress agenda and the Executive Committee report and resolutions finally adopted, proves beyond all doubt what the Communist Party stands for. The interests of the working-class and its allies in the professional and middle classes; the present and future best interests of the whole British people; the desire that the highest traditions of the age-long struggle of the working-class against capitalism for social progress, for the extension of democracy and the advance to complete political power and socialism, shall now be carried forward in the conditions of our time with confidence and clarity and with full appreciation of our responsibilities and obligations to the peoples of the world. And, dominating all, the conviction and determination that this advance must be based on a united labour movement, the achievement of which would be greatly hastened if the Communist Party were affiliated to the Labour Party.

We have noted with great interest how in recent years more and more fraternal delegates have attended the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party conferences, but note the number of Communist Parties which sent their fraternal delegates to our Eighteenth Congress: France, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Ireland, Ceylon, South Africa, China, Germany, Spain, Cuba, Lebanon, India, Poland. Fraternal greetings were also received from the Communist Parties in Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Yugoslavia, Canada, America, Iceland, Austria and Palestine.

We were indeed proud that so many Communist Parties honoured us and made us feel our responsibility to the people of the world so keenly. We were glad that in London, where Marx and Engels wrote *Workers of all Lands, Unite*, the presence and messages of our foreign comrades have still further strengthened the bonds of international solidarity, and we are quite sure that our Congress will also have had important lessons and results for the Communist Parties in other countries. For just as international unity has been established in the industrial field through the formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions, so we are confident that our Congress will give an impetus to the forces that seek to secure international political unity.

What was the keynote of the Congress? The necessity to sharpen the struggle against capitalism, to support the Labour Government in every positive measure it takes to improve the conditions of the people, to organise mass pressure by the labour movement to make the Government change policies that are against the people's interests either at home or abroad, to strengthen every phase of working-class organisation and activity, so that the fight against reaction and capitalism can be intensified inside and outside Parliament. To develop new, democratic initiative, leadership and activity on the part of the working-class, so that on the basis of a real democratic and progressive policy in home and foreign affairs, Britain shall serve the interests of the workers by hand and brain and be able to take its rightful place in the leadership of the United Nations in the closest co-operation with America and the Soviet Union. In this way, our country can make its full contribution to lasting peace and prosperity and increase the opportunities for further advance on the path to Socialism.

Congress adopted policies on nationalisation, wages, exports, hous-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing, agriculture, demobilisation and social services that can assist in securing a real economic revival of British industry. A revival based on increasing standards of living for the working-class and one that can avoid a short-lived replacement trade boom. An economic revival which will place Britain in a stronger position to fight the dangers of a new world economic crisis.

For such a conception of economic revival to be realised, Labour should produce an over-all economic plan going far beyond anything so far contemplated in the programme of the Labour Government. A plan which would take into account every aspect of the situation at home and abroad, and two essential features of which should be: (1) measures to increase wages decisively at the expense of profits and (2) the development of a progressive tax system and the bold and rapid carrying through of Labour's social programme.

Congress fully appreciated that such a wide perspective could be realised only on the basis of a democratic and progressive foreign policy. It, therefore, warned the labour movement that unless it compelled the Government completely to change its present foreign policy, which is simply the continuation of the imperialist line of the Tory Party and reactionary monopoly capitalism, there can be no fundamental social progress in Britain, and that the whole future of this country is in grave peril.

This was why we were unanimous in expressing our determination to fight for the end of the London Conference deadlock, and for the continued leadership in the United Nations as a whole of Britain, America and the Soviet Union. This great coalition has overcome the hostility of powerful reactionary forces in war. If the leadership and unity of the working-class is still further strengthened, this great coalition can overcome all existing opposition, and be enabled to build a lasting peace and secure new forms of international economic co-operation which can assist in organising full employment.

Labour needs to be warned that the working-class is not failing to note that in all the slanders and vehemence of Tory opposition against the domestic policy of the Labour Government, there is not one word of criticism from Churchill or Eden about its foreign policy. There is a significance in this that cannot be ignored without danger to everything for which the labour movement stands.

Our Congress exposed the dangerous propaganda and intentions that lie behind the conception of a Western Bloc and those who seek to revise the Potsdam decisions and endeavour to revive the political and economic power of German and Japanese monopoly capitalism. Above all, the Congress expressed its determination to fight for the closest unity between Britain and the Soviet Union and to make the twenty years' treaty a matter of reality and not a mere diplomatic document. For we of the Communist Party believe that Britain's future depends more upon the closest co-operation of our country with the Soviet Union than on any other single factor in the international situation.

For this reason we welcome the visit of Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes to Moscow, and believe that this reflects the mass pressure of the people of Britain and America who desire to see the deadlock that exists at the moment ended as quickly as possible.

Our resolutions on India, Indonesia, Greece and Spain were a complementary part of our conception of what Britain's foreign policy should be, for we not only want to see the political and moral destruction of fascism follow its military defeat.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We want all people oppressed by British imperialism to be given their freedom and independence, so that in co-operation with us they can freely develop their own gigantic resources, assist in securing all-round increases in the standards and conditions of all working people and make a substantial contribution towards lessening the dangers of a new world economic crisis.

The Congress saw no easy way to achieve the solution of the problems so urgently required in the interests of all working people. It specifically warned the labour movement of the struggle and sabotage reaction will organise, and showed the danger confronting the labour movement if its conception of struggle against capitalism is limited to a purely parliamentary one.

It demanded that just as the Tories call on their allies in the ranks of the employers, bankers and landlords to organise opposition and pressure against the Government, so must the Government organise its allies in the factories, trade unions, co-operative movement, Labour and Communist Parties to unite to crush this Tory opposition.

We have not had long to wait to see the justification of this warning. Churchill's speech at the Conference of the Conservative Party, the censure motion in Parliament, the attitude of the Tory press, already reveal the line of attack. In their opposition to Labour the Tories will not hesitate to use the fascists, or even to develop their own special type of fascist organisation, of which the Conservative Central Office system of bodyguards might easily become an example.

Already the fascists of various types believe the moment is ripe to raise their heads. The auctioning of Hitler's bust, the insolence of Mosley's publishing plans, the Jesus Christ Hitler group, the Bedfords and Becketts, al alike show that the rats are now coming out of their holes.

They can be given no quarter nor concessions. They represent the vilest thing in the world—fascism. Our boys have not died crushing fascism in Germany and the Far East in order to make it safe for fascists and neo-fascist organisations to exist in Britain. The Labour movement expects the Government to deal immediately and firmly with these people because it is essentially a part of the new struggle against reaction that has to be won at once.

During the war there was a slogan "We can take it." The people did take it, but the Conservative Party and Churchill cannot. This is why no quarter can be given in the political struggle that is now opening up, and which will intensify as months go by. We need to be on guard. The working-class must at all times remember that the Tory Party has never in its history organised anything but poverty, unemployment and war for the British people and imperialist oppression and slavery for the colonial peoples.

They seek now to prevent new pages of history being written. The labour movement will be all the stronger to write these new pages if it purges its own movement of capitalist ideas and influence. It will be all the stronger when some of its leaders begin to hate capitalism more than they do Communism, when opposition to the affiliation of the Communist Party has been dropped in the light of the grim realities of the present situation, and when more and more all that is best and socialist in the Labour Party understands the need for the Communist Party to be affiliated to the Labour Party.

May I say here that I consider the recent statement of Mr. Morgan Philips, Secretary of the Labour Party, warning working-class organisations not to place any money in the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Co-operative Printing Society that is to be responsible for the publication of the *Daily Worker*, to be one of the most shameful in the Labour Party's history—a statement which has nothing in common with Socialism or democracy. At a moment when the working-class needs every militant newspaper it can control to fight the vicious Tory propaganda of the capitalist press, surely this is not the time to throw spanners in the machinery that seeks to strengthen the cause for which the labour movement stands.

The advent of the Labour Government makes possible great advances in Britain, but it would be wrong to believe that these already represent Socialism. No Labour Government in any part of the world has yet achieved Socialism. Only in the Soviet Union under the leadership of the Communist Party has a Socialist system of society been established, based on the ending of the exploitation of man by man, and a new classless society begun to be organised.

For many labour leaders, the idea of Socialism is one which leaves untouched the fundamental question of abolishing the system of rent, interest and profit. It does not include the ownership of the means of production by the people, or the liberation of the colonial peoples. Their conception of Socialism is nationalisation with compensation. Profit is still to go to a privileged class. This goes along with a conception of "gradualism" in achieving socialist aims, which in practice leaves the capitalist class free to overthrow democracy before any fundamental changes are made.

The Congress drew attention to this difference in conception of what Socialism is on the part of the Communist Party and the Labour Party, because the pressure of capitalist ideas is still strongly felt, and because the labour movement in Britain lacks a clear theoretical basis, making it all the more important that the widest Marxist education should now be carried throughout the entire labour movement, along with the ceaseless strengthening of the Communist Party, so that in the present period of great social changes the working-class and its allies can be correctly guided along the road towards Socialism, and the harmful and dangerous illusions and theories of Social Democracy be successfully combated.

The Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party has made its full contribution to a tremendous all-round advance for the working-class. We are entering a new year. The first for six years, of peace. It can be made, despite the gravity of all the many and difficult problems which have to be solved, one of the greatest years in world history. For although reaction never gives up, the forces working for social advance, economic co-operation in place of cut-throat economic competition for lasting peace and Socialism have grown stronger.

In many European countries new democratic Governments have emerged that will no longer be pawns of rival imperialist powers, but will become bastions of social progress and democracy. There has been a splendid and tremendous awakening of the colonial peoples. In Britain a Labour Government, and a large number of labour majorities on local councils, means that reactionary forces have been turned out of their former strongholds. Today the glorious strength of the Soviet Union stands revealed to the whole world and makes itself felt in every aspect of world affairs. The formation of the World Federation of Trade Unions and the great and growing influence of Communist Parties in so many European countries, all together represent new constructive forces that united and collectively directed can help to make 1946 a year of outstanding, positive

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

achievement and victory for the working people.

A year in which in Britain we can strengthen democracy and weaken capitalism. In which we can increase the membership of the Trade Unions, Co-operatives, Labour Parties and Communist Parties, close the ranks and, inspired with a common purpose, go forward for the full carrying out of the policy for which the people voted at the General Election. This policy, while not yet Socialism, could by its achievement represent a great advance towards the winning of complete political power, and enable the working-class to carry out its historic mission—the establishment of Socialism.

Affiliation

by TED BRAMLEY

BY what extremely narrow margins of time and numbers have some of the most fateful decisions of individuals and nations turned. The great Reform Bill, which included the abolition of the Rotten and Pocket Boroughs without Compensation, is a case in point. It was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of one. The Battle of Britain is another. The huge might of the German Air Force was broken by the R.A.F. and the balance tipped when the last reserves of fighters were in the air.

By an equally narrow margin may the issue of Communist Party affiliation be decided at the Labour Party Conference. A resolution is certain to come before the Conference next Whitsun, because so many affiliated organisations are pressing for Communist affiliation. It is impossible to say which way the issue will go. Organisations casting approximately 800,000 votes are pledged to support. Others, casting approximately 800,000 votes, are pledged against. Other organisations with 800,000 votes are not as yet committed either way. Clearly the issue hangs very much in the balance.

Does it matter so very much which way it goes? It does indeed.

There is in this whole present world situation a great opportunity for British Labour, an opportunity which, if taken at the flood, can lead on towards Socialism in Britain and a Socialist world. But if this opportunity is not taken, if the opportunity is not handled in the right way, Britain and the world may slip back into crisis, a fascist revival and a new world war.

The fight for unity—Communist affiliation—is hard and bitter. It will get more so. I have had a good deal of personal experience of what is involved. I have been a Communist candidate for Parliament and the Borough Council in Acton. There for more than two years we have been waging an intense struggle for unity. Many, many thousands of people have been caught up in one way or another in this fight. More than half the working-class organisations heard both sides fully, and voted practically unanimously for unity. More than twenty thousand persons were canvassed on the doorstep—more than ten thousand signed a demand for unity. This was practically every Labour voter canvassed. Later, when I was withdrawn, a completely united campaign was conducted. Labour and Communist members working side by side—it was universally welcomed. When later we Communists claimed the right to put forward one candidate for the Borough Council, we were opposed by Labour.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We polled 1,570 votes in one ward—370 more than any Labour men had ever polled and we narrowly missed election. I mention these things to illustrate how the fight for unity is taking sharp turns, also to show that we have some recent first-hand experience of the real feelings—the real arguments and the real difficulties in the way of Communist affiliation. More than half the arguments raised at the Labour Party Conference in 1943 cut no ice whatever. It is a waste of time dealing with them.

I have found really serious opinions widely held—partly by supporters and partly by opponents—which need thrashing out.

Three Themes put forward with Variation by those who claim they want Unity.

(i) *Communist affiliation will never be won because the opposition of the Labour leaders is too strong and is not likely to be overcome* !

This view, no doubt, arises because Communist affiliation has been striven for and repeatedly defeated since 1920. It has undoubtedly been a hard and uphill fight. Evidence is accumulating to prove that it is winable in the near future. The number of organisations and votes pledged to support it are already greater than the numbers ever cast in favour of it before, that is, one-third of the affiliated votes. A further one-third include a large proportion that may be won between now and the Conference. Some great organisations which opposed on a previous occasion, like the N.U.R., are now in favour. Within the trade unions and co-operatives a growing section of opinion supports the Communists and many of its outstanding representatives, like Horner, Scott, Papworth, Burns and Henrotte, are acknowledged leaders of the trade union and the co-operatives. Among the newly-elected members of Parliament are a great number who frankly recognise the good services rendered in their constituencies by the members of the Communist Party. A large number of the old arguments used against the Communists are now as dead as a doornail. In particular, the coming into existence of the new World Trade Union International is a devastating blow against all those who argue that it is impossible to have unity between Communists and Socialists. Electoral unity was only narrowly defeated by less than 90,000 votes at the last Labour Party Conference. Never were the possibilities brighter than at the present moment. A determined effort by those wanting unity can win the day.

(*ii*) *Why not dissolve the Communist Party and go in to the Labour Party as individual members*? *After all, that would be the quicker way of winning unity and there are no real differences between Labour and Communist Party*?

This argument only arises among those who lack confidence in the prospect of ever winning affiliation, and among those who cannot see any real fundamental reason for a separate Communist Party. If the Communist Party were to dissolve itself it is by no means certain that its members, especially its best members, would be admitted to the Labour Party. Even if they were, we should be charged with resorting to a subterfuge—entering by the backdoor because we cannot enter by the front door. What a beautiful weapon that would make for Mr. Morrison to continue his hobby-horse about Communist dishonesty. Far more serious is this fact ; by dissolving the Communist Party we should be putting out of existence a collective, organised force, which is the vital element needed to develop the labour movement to its full growth. To add a

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

few thousand individual members to the Labour Party will make no great difference to the working-class. To add the Communist Party as an organisation means something much more. It gives a collective force guided by the scientific principles of Marxism, to help complete the education of the masses of Labour supporters, and to strengthen the movement in the daily struggle.

(iii) *Is it wise to affiliate to the Labour Party, which is a Social-Democratic Party, when the Labour Government is bound to fail? Surely the Communist Party will become equally discredited and would be better advised to fight for its own policy independent of the Labour Party?*

I have heard this argument put forward and attempts made to buttress it with reference to Lenin's remarks in Left Wing Communism. Namely, the necessity of supporting a Labour Government in order to strip the masses of their illusions in what can be accomplished in Parliament. It is a mistake frequently made in the labour movement of applying a statement made in one given situation to another at a very different stage. The first two Labour Governments in Britain were doomed to failure. This was so, partly because of the general world situation which then prevailed, partly to the character of the leadership, MacDonald, etc., and partly to the inexperience of the masses and to the inadequate development of the Communist Party. We now have a world situation in which there is a possibility of international co-operation in which the Soviet Union plays a great part. We have a growing tendency to international working-clas unity. We have a government elected with a majority. We have a working-class greatly developed in experience in the struggle against fascism, a greatly developed revolutionary opinion within that labour movement and a much more developed and influential Communist Party. These factors, in my view, make possible the carrying out of Labour's immediate programme within the framework of Parliament and the system, given a serious offensive by the working-class movement against the capitalists. The programme, if carried out, will undermine considerably the economic and political power of the capitalist class, though it will not by any means represent Socialism. The movement will then be better equipped and more favourably placed to take more decisive measures for the destruction of the capitalist system. If this is theoretically a possibility, then it would be madness for the Communist Party to ignore it. On the contrary, the obvious job of the Communist Party is to translate what is a realisable possibility into an actual reality. The Communist Party must help to break down all the Tory and monopoly capitalist opposition and to improve Labour's programme and carry it into effect. The Communist Party, in doing this, will be rendering an unparalleled service to the whole labour movement and to the working-class. In consequence the influence of the Communist Party will grow. In a nutshell, the interests of the Communist Party, the working-class and the labour movement are inseparable.

ARGUMENTS PUT FORWARD BY AVOWED OPPONENTS OF AFFILIATION AND WIDELY ECHOED BY THE RANK AND FILE.

(i) *There are such fundamental differences in theory between the Labour Party and the Communist Party as would make genuine participation of the Communists in the Labour Party totally impossible. One stands for parliamentary democracy and peaceful evolution, the other*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stands for dictatorship and violent revolution. How can oil and water mix?

This belief is very widely held and undoubtedly accounts for the larger part of the doubts among rank and file Labour members about the possibilities of success arising from Communist affiliation. The aims of the Labour Party and the Communist Party as proclaimed in their respective constitutions are in no way in conflict with each other. Every single one of the aims contained in the Labour Party's constitution are honestly subscribed to and desired by the Communist Party. In what then consists the difference between the two parties justifying the existence of a Communist Party at all? The explanation consists in this. Though there are many similar points in the immediate programmes of the two Parties, the Communist Party is able to help the working-class choose the strategy and tactics to conduct the struggle for its immediate and future objectives more successfully. This is because it bases its theory and practice upon the principles of Marxism. It considers all problems of the past, present and future of society from a scientific standpoint. It is guided in all that it does by the principles of this science which, in our view, enable it to understand more clearly the precise workings of the present social system, and the precise nature of the society for which the labour movement is striving.

There are innumerable examples to prove this. After the General Strike the policy of Mondism was adopted. An era of organised capitalism, free from crisis was proclaimed by some of the principal spokesmen of the Labour Party. Fordism was hailed as superseding Marxism. The Communist Party exposed these theories as false and warned the workers that a great world economic crisis would come. And it did. Fascism was for many years regarded by some Labour leaders as a joke, who even as late as 1938 advised the workers to ignore it in London. The Communist Party throughout truly appreciated the enormous menace of fascism and fought consistently to rally the forces of the working-class to fight it in Britain, China, Abyssinia and Spain. Some Labour leaders have often failed to appreciate the true significance of Socialist Russia. The Communist Party has consistently proclaimed its faith in Socialist Russia and of the value to our own people of friendship with the Soviet Union. How sound this was has been brilliantly demonstrated during the war. It is now universally recognised by the man in the street. Some Labour leaders have bitterly opposed unity of the working-class, whereas the Communists have always sought for unity of every section of the working-class. The enormous victory won in the fight against fascism when practically every section of the working-class in all countries have stood shoulder to shoulder for that common aim is obvious to all. Because the Labour Party does not base itself upon the scientific principles we call Marxism it is severely limited in its capacity to lead the working people to socialism and has been frequently diverted and disrupted by its enemies. Because the Communist Party does fully base itself upon the principles of Marxism it can contribute to the Labour Party the benefit of a theory and practice without which labour cannot defeat capital. This theory of Marxism is not something separate and apart from the labour movement, nor is it alien to the British working-class. On the contrary, a major contribution to the theory and practice of Marxism has been made by British Labour, as witness the active co-operation in London between the British workers and Karl Marx and Engels.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The alleged fundamental difference —democracy and evolution versus dictatorship and violent revolution— is steadily becoming recognised as a false posing of the question. Evolution and revolution are really part of one process. Society develops, at times slowly and apparently peacefully, and at other times rapidly and violently. For example, slowly and gradually the working people of the world roused themselves against fascism. Finally, they found it necessary to move quickly and to use force violently to smash fascism. No member of the labour movement can deny the necessity and justice of that. Democracy is of various kinds. Some forms give dictatorial powers to landlords and employers and very little freedom to working people. Others give dictatorial powers to the working-class and peasants, 90 per cent. of the population, and very little freedom to landlords and employers. Really democracy itself evolves. As it does so, political power passes from the hands of one class to the hands of another. The Communist works for the development of democracy, so that it gives power and freedom to the working-class. Already in the experience of the last ten years this question has become clear to millions of British workers, who did not see it in quite the same way when MacDonald used to attack the Communists. We know that the whole working-class will ultimately see this thing clearly as the march forward to socialism develops.

Thus the two parties have a distinct existence, size, composition and role, but they are not contradictory. The Constitution of the Labour Party itself provides for the affiliation of Socialist societies. The very structure of the British Labour Party was designed to embrace all sections—trade unions, co-operatives, socialist societies. Arising from the affiliation of the Communist Party, the extension of Marxist ideas in the Labour Party and the labour movement will undoubtedly grow apace. The more they grow, the sooner will the day come when the two parties may merge into one great united political party of the working-class, many millions strong and based upon the principles of Marxism. If the world trade unions, which have been divided for so many years, have found a way to unity in spite of their differences, why not the British labour movement?

(ii) *Communists cannot be trusted. They have a double morality, one face to the public, another in private to themselves. They are always changing their policy. Look how they did that in the middle of the war. All this arises because they are not free agents, they are really the instruments of Moscow.*

This is undoubtedly a declining line of argument. It used to be very effective before the Communist International was dissolved. Since then opponents of unity have had even greater difficulty in making any case at all to prove that the Communists are not their own masters. Of course, the Communists will always find themselves in general sympathy with what is being done by the Soviet Union. This is natural, because what the Soviet Union has done has always been in the interests of the workers of the world. Similarly, the Communist Party will find itself in sympathy with what Communists in other countries are doing. Why? Because the struggle of the working-class is an international struggle, and a victory for the working-class for one country is a victory for the workers of another. The charge that the Communist Party changes its policy is a curious one. Every political party changes its policy in accordance with the varying changes in the world and the country. The Labour Party has many times changed its policy. For example, it was in favour of Chamber-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lain's non-intervention policy in Spain but half way through it changed and opposed this policy. It was opposed to conscription and then, quite rightly, decided to support it. It was rightly opposed to rearmament under Baldwin and Chamberlain and then was in favour of it under Churchill. Similarly, the Communist Party was opposed to conscription and was then in favour of it, it was opposed to rearmament and was then in favour, and furthermore, was opposed to the Chamberlain Government and its war policy, because it was not a genuine war against fascism. But we supported the war when, under Churchill, it became a genuine struggle for the destruction of fascism. Nothing abnormal in that. These changes are made the better to achieve the fundamental aims about which there can be no compromise.

It is the practice of the Communist Party to thrash out its policy and to take its decisions by vote in conference. It is the practice of the Party when a decision is taken, for everyone, including the minority who may not have agreed, to accept the decisions and in a democratic manner to work to carry it out as a united force. There is nothing immoral or dishonest in that. It is an expression of real democracy.

But really these arguments that the Communists cannot be trusted cut very little ice among workers who have had personal experience in the trade unions and in the factories and in localities of working side by side with Communists. Such people usually pay high tribute to the personal honesty, integrity and self-sacrifice of Communists as individuals. Indeed, many are disgusted to hear Labour people telling Communists privately what splendid fellows they are and then denouncing them in public. This is double morality if you like. Apparently the Miners Federation and the Labour Government do put a great deal of trust in Arthur Horner to help produce our most vital raw material, coal, upon which the very life of the nation depends.

(iii) *The Communist Party is an electoral liability to the Labour Party. If affiliated, it would frighten the electors and cause Labour to lose votes. See how insignificant were the votes polled by Communist candidates in the General Election—which proves they would be no real asset to the Labour Party.*

Undoubtedly the famous Red Bogy has flourished in the past, and the votes for Communist candidates have been small. It is true that even today in most areas Communist opinion among the electors is a minority. The old bogy, however, is dead. The experiences of the war and especially the recognition of Soviet Russia's true position has helped to bury it. In the recent elections the Labour Party appeared before the electors as the only practical alternative government to that of the Tories. The result was the electors plumped for the Labour candidates in preference to Liberal, Communist or Common Wealth, regardless of the individual merits of the respective candidates. The Communists helped to make this success for Labour possible by strictly limiting the number of candidates which they put forward. The constituencies chosen were by no means the best working-class or Communist areas. Even so, the votes polled an average of 5,000 per constituency under the peculiar conditions prevailing in that General Election were significant. Even more significant were the results of the Municipal Elections, where 337 candidates stood in 278 wards and polled a total of 227,597 votes. Forty-three candidates were returned. In London eighteen councillors were returned, as against one previously. In Scotland, for the county council one-third of the Communist candidates were returned,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

14 out of 36. The percentage, 27½ per cent. of votes polled in London in 100 wards, one-eighth of the total wards indicates a vote if all wards were contested of over 600,000 in London alone. Comparative proportions for the whole of Britain might equal three millions. Where Labour candidates were not standing, as in Surbiton, the electors cast their votes for the Communist in practically the same numbers as for Labour candidates in adjoining and similar wards. Many Labour M.P.s owe Communist members a great deal for the work they did and will freely admit it. A significant percentage of the electors are beginning to vote Communist. With affiliation there will be no need for Communists to seek representation in the House of Commons or on local authorities in competition with Labour. They will take their chance on their merits in the selection conference of the Labour Party. Thus, there should be in future elections one list of working-class candidates, Labour, but including within that title every section of the movement, including the Communists.

These are the main points of controversy as I find them today.

And now to conclude. Labour must grasp the lesson which runs like a red thread through the whole history of the British labour movement. That lesson is—United We Stand, Divided We Fall.

Since the earliest days the workers have striven for unity. When the first trade unions and co-operatives were formed, through the glorious days of Chartism, the elementary instinct for unity prevailed. In the conception of trade unions and co-operatives unity is the very heart of it. In the great break from Liberal influence to the formation of an independent political party of working men and women the idea of unity of the workers as a class was the very essence of that step. It reveals itself in the very structure of the Labour Party, which was designed to function as the broad, all-inclusive electoral organisation of the whole working-class movement, and within which there was room for various sections and opinions. The prohibition of the Communist Party perpetrated in the first instance by MacDonald and his now discredited colleagues—was and is a violation of that principle. The labour movement has paid dearly for it. The time has come to end this position. By unity we have progressed. By disunity we have been delayed. Now by Communist affiliation—which means unity stronger and deeper than ever before—British Labour can and will sweep on towards Socialism.

Why these Strikes ?

by JIM GARDNER*

AT no time in British history was there greater hope and expectancy than followed the general election of July, 1945, and the return of a Labour Government to power. The catastrophe of the war brought disillusionment in the Tory Government and a determination to end the basic causes of war. Tory free enterprise was decisively rejected in favour of a socialist approach to the social and economic problems of our time. But expectancy has to be satisfied and, while hope continues, it is tempered by a growing uneasiness, as revealed in the widespread demand for a speed-up of demobilisation, and in the growing industrial unrest, of which the strikes of dockers and gas workers and the

* General Secretary, National Union of Foundry Workers.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demonstrations of building workers were manifestations.

Uneasiness does not particularly arise from bewilderment and alarm with the foreign policy of the Labour Government, although there is undoubted resentment against British armed forces being used to maintain the status-quo in colonial empire, and some concern at the apparent preference for Wall Street over the one socialist country in the world today. But it is in the absence of a defined policy on wages, a feeling of insecurity from the increasing ratio of unemployment, and a reaction against bad working conditions, that industrial unrest has its real basis.

Cost of living index figures are not now accepted as having any relationship to comparative wage standards. It is generally known that wartime advances, in the aggregate, represent a nominal increase, and that wages are lower than 1939 standards. A wage policy is urgently needed that will bring wages in advance of pre-war standards, and in some comparable relationship to increased production capacity. Until this is done there will be dissatisfaction and a fertile soil for the unofficial strike.

Many improvements in workshop amenities were introduced in the wartime factories, and in some of the larger factories engaged on war production. A new standard has been established, but comparatively few workers yet share its advantages. Workers are no longer prepared to put up with insanitary, badly ventilated, and poorly lighted shops. Neither are they content to carry home the dirt of the factory, or take their food off the factory bench or floor. Bad conditions are also fertile causes of dissatisfaction and the unofficial strike. In these circumstances, speedy compliance with the 1937 Factory Act, and its extension to include all places of employment, is highly desirable.

Working people in the main are satisfied with the programme of the Labour Government as it concerns home affairs, and are eager for its fulfilment. They are not without understanding of the difficulties, nor of their own obligations, to implement their vote by active support in the sphere of industry, for the realisation of the Government's declared aims. They are ready to produce the goods for the reconversion and reconstruction of industry, and to provide a higher social standard. But if earnings reflect a lowering standard, and unemployment begins to raise its ugly head in their midst, a feeling of frustration is surely to be expected.

Falling earnings and increasing unemployment (now more than a quarter million) is too close a parallel to what happened before. Working people do not forget the Means Test and all it meant in the years before the war. They want more than a verbal assurance that it won't happen again, and that the promise of full employment and social security is not to be dishonoured as was the promise of "homes for heroes" following the 1914-18 war. It gives no satisfaction that there is a labour shortage in certain industries and that demobilisation is being speeded up to meet it, nor to be told that redundancy is only a temporary effect of the transition from war to peace production. Unemployment, or a drop in the pay packet from the stoppage of overtime and reduced piecework earnings means hardship, whether temporary or not, and facts are always more tangible than promises.

Uneasiness has other causes, which in their final consequences can all be explained in relation to employment, wages and working conditions. Under the impetus of war, production technique has made tremendous progress, which, examined in relation to the metal and engineering industries, has

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

meant a speed-up of production and a growing disproportion of semi-skilled to skilled employment. New metal alloys and plastics have brought new processes and a changing labour force. Prefabrication, die-casting and drop-forging have changed the build-up of the job in every section of engineering, affecting manufacture, finish and assembly in greater or lesser degree. Breaking down large components to simple production units has meant an expansion of mass production and the development of a new and higher production technique. Now the workers are asking if these developments are to be used to advance social standards or if the speed up is to be the means of reducing the numbers employed and lower wage rates.

This questioning has reason in the fact that much of the so-called semi-skilled employment, which has so greatly increased during the war, is without an established rate. Efforts are being made by the unions to establish rates for welders, die-casters and others, and it is not an easy job. Such rates as are paid vary, from the unskilled to a margin under the skilled rates, and when it is remembered that this labour force (semi-skilled) now outnumbers skilled labour, the effects on the general standards for the industries concerned will be easily appreciated. This generalisation must be qualified by the fact that piecework or bonus payments augment the earnings of most of these so-called semi-skilled workers, although the total effect of this is to camouflage the process of derating which concerns all the workers in these industries.

Many of the necessary adjustments in the change over to peace-time production could be accomplished without friction if there were:—

(*a*) prior consultation between employers and workers to reach agreement;

(*b*) if they were not accompanied by attempts to reduce piece-work, and bonus earnings and

(*c*) if the rate for the job was maintained and all attempts to reduce the job from a skilled to a semi-skilled category were stopped.

Upgrading and recruitment of labour would not be resisted if there was mutual agreement on the need for, and the means to regulate, such changes without loss of job status or earnings. Officious and indiscriminate use of managerial rights is more responsible for unofficial strikes than any other cause.

When workers are aggrieved they look to their trade unions for guidance and a remedy. But if adjustment of grievances is not readily forthcoming, they not unnaturally turn to a more direct method of drawing attention to the issues in dispute. They are critical of national agreements which seem to concede too much to the employers, and of an all too ponderous and not over-democratic trade union machine which moves too slowly in dealing with grievances. They are resentful of long-drawn-out national negotiations for a long-awaited and overdue wage increase and of the deliberate procrastination of the employers, which usually ends in deadlock and a reference to arbitration.

Trade union organisation has, by amalgamation and federation, provided an all too imperfect machine for negotiating at national level. It is even more imperfect in giving responses at lower levels when the members are most in need of the services for which they pay their contributions. These weaknesses have got to be remedied, if the trade unions are to take their proper place in the planning and development of industry, in the new conditions of post-war Britain.

Trade union organisation lags seriously behind the changes in the organisation of industry and the new

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conditions of labour relations which have emerged from the war. There is diffusion of trade union interest, and disunity of trade union organisation, creating confusion at all levels, with as many policies as there are divided loyalties. Mixed union membership in the factories gives scope for the non-unionist, destroys trade union authority and makes it difficult to retain the loyalty of even the trade union member in his or her own union, Where there is disunity, there can be no real democracy, and where this is lacking, trade union discipline can have very little meaning. All this adds up, in part or in whole, to the unofficial strike. Trade union organisation in its present state lends itself to encouragement of the unofficial movement.

Trade union democracy must be a living reality in the minds of trade union members. It must mean more than merely to give the members an opportunity of voting periodically for an executive member or official whom they don't know. Executive members and officials, however progressive, are themselves in need of that close association with the living organism of the union which is at grips with the problem of life in industry inside the factories. Trade union democracy, as practised in the nineteenth century, when unions were smaller and negotiated at district level, can no longer suffice, but has got to be made to fit the new tasks and new responsibilities as a full partner in building a new social fabric.

Amalgamation of unions with the same industrial interest is the most desirable solution to the problem of unity in shaping a policy acceptable to all. All obstacles to this end must be removed as speedily as possible. But whether unity at national level is obtained by amalgamation, or the strengthening of federations of trade unions, provision must be made for bringing lower levels into closer relationship with executive authority. It must also provide for co-ordination of union interests at every level from the executive to shop stewards committee.

The unofficial shop stewards committee gets its standing from its closeness to the workers in the factory. By bringing the shop steward and committee within the framework of an amalgamation or a federation, both will be strengthened. Trade union democracy will take on a new meaning when the members feel they have a voice in shaping policy and are in daily contact with the union administration.

If the T.U.C. interim report on trade union structure was accepted as a serious contribution for democratic trade union unity there is no obstacle that could not be overcome. This would, indeed, be a positive contribution towards providing the basis for full productive co-operation with the Labour Government for a socialist solution of our social and economic problem. The General Council of the T.U.C. would become a more authoritative body than it is at the present time and the standing of the British trade union movement in the world trade union organisation would be greatly improved. Unofficial movements only thrive because there is disunity, and unity is the one and only solution.

There was an exceptionally heavy demand for the December issue of LABOUR MONTHLY, and many of our regular readers may have missed their copies. This can be avoided for the future by taking out a postal subscription. Rates :

Home 7/- for 12 months. 3/6 for 6 months.

Abroad 8/- " " 4/- "

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Palestine

by JACK GASTER

The mission that is to enquire into the position of the Jews in Europe, and to seek a solution of the problem of Palestine, is not helped by its exclusive Anglo-American composition. But the character of Bevin's statement, in its recognition of the imperative need to aid in the re-establishment of the Jewish communities in Europe, and at the same time to secure agreement of Jew and Arab in the future peaceful development of Palestine, is to be welcomed. This, however, will not be achieved if the progressive forces are not clear about the difficulties that stand in the way and fail to understand the basis upon which that solution must rest.

ONCE the home of the Jews, for a thousand years in the undisputed possession of the Arabs, though latterly under Turkish sovereignty, Palestine was conquered by the British in 1917. At that time some 58,000 Jews lived there in harmony with the Arabs. In 1917, when Britain was hard pressed and America was not yet ready, the British Government, as an act of military expediency and in order to secure the support of American Jewry, issued the Balfour Declaration (which was subsequently incorporated in the Mandate) promising support for the creation "in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people," though in 1915 a pledge had been given to the Arabs "to recognise and support the independence of the Arabs" within territories which clearly included Palestine.

While the religious associations of Palestine to Jewry go back over the centuries, the Zionist Movement, which seeks to create a Jewish State in Palestine, has a history of no more than 60 years, born as a reaction to the pogroms in Eastern Europe in the latter half of the last century. But British interests in Palestine were not those of a philanthropic friend of oppressed Jewry. Britain saw Palestime as the strategic centre covering the Middle East and the Suez Canal, with the great natural harbour of Haifa offering a useful alternative to Alexandria, and as an outlet for the oil of Iraq. While British imperialism planned to use the Jews as a counter against the Arab demand for independence and so maintain its dominant position in Palestine, the leading British Zionists were its willing tools.

It is against this background that both the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine and the growth of the Arab National Movement in Palestine and the neighbouring countries must be considered. Today 600,000 Jews are settled in Palestine, and whatever solution is ultimately reached, it must take into account that these Jews have earned the right to live there in peace and be free to develop their new home. They have in many ways developed the economy of Palestine. New methods of irrigation and agriculture have been introduced, power plants built, new towns created, a considerable measure of industrialisation introduced. Over £100,000,000 of British and American capital—both Jewish and non-Jewish—has been invested in Palestine.

Even before 1917, Arab landworkers were poor, weighed down by debt, intensely exploited by absentee Arab landlords. But while in some measure improved services have partially benefited the Arab masses, the fact that a new landless poverty-stricken mass of Arab workers has been created and that Arab handicrafts have been largely wiped out by Jewish industry cannot be lightly dismissed. Arab agriculture has not been developed. The war speeded up this

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

process and turned Palestine into an important supply base for the Middle East. While this temporarily created employment for masses of Jewish and Arab workers (who for the first time formed Arab Trade Unions) prices soared, food was scarce, and the end of hostilities has left Palestine facing a grave economic crisis, particularly affecting the Arab workers, who are largely excluded from work in Jewish industry (which forms the bulk of Palestinian industry) and agriculture by the Zionist policy of Jewish exclusiveness. Up to 1939 the organisation of the Arabs was backward and the Arab National Movement was under the leadership of the feudal landowners, who were largely influenced by Nazi ideas. This leadership was able to lead the Arab masses, who saw the Zionist policy as the cause of their poverty and the Zionists as the tools of imperialism, into directing their anti-imperialist feeling mainly against the Jews, whose economic domination they feared.

After the Peel Commission's recommendation of partitioning Palestine as a solution had been rejected by both Arab and Jew, the National Government declared its policy in a White Paper in 1939 which, partly in an effort to head off the pro-German tendencies of some of the Arab Nationalist leaders at that time, proposed (i) that Palestine should become an independent State in ten years, and in the meantime government should gradually be transferred to "representative" institutions of the two communities proportionate to the number of each community in Palestine; (ii) to restrict Jewish immigration so that the Jewish population did not exceed one-third of the total population; and (iii) to restrict further sales of land to Jews. Point (i) has never been implemented and today Palestine is virtually under a police regime.

This policy was denounced by the Zionists as a betrayal of the Balfour Declaration and they demanded continued unlimited immigration and the creation of a Jewish State. The Arabs were to be guaranteed minority rights in that State.

Neither Government nor Zionist solution was acceptable to the Arabs, who continued to demand that Palestine should form part of the Independent Arab States of the Middle East and not be artificially torn away.

Are British interests any different today? Though in recent years Government policy, with a view to improving Britain's position in the Arab countries of the Middle East, may have appeared to tend towards greater sympathy for Arab claims against the conception of the Independent Jewish State, is British imperialism now anxious to see an independent Arab State? Far from it. Do we not know the methods of imperialism sufficiently to understand that this playing off of one people against another is merely a device to preserve control over both?

It is not without significance that the greatest protagonists of the Zionist cause today are found in the U.S.A., whose government have recently concluded agreements for the laying of an additional pipe line from Iraq to Haifa to serve American oil interests, though even in America the need to secure Arab support is leading to further conflict.

The whole of the Middle East is a field of imperialist conflict with Palestine at the moment as the cockpit.

Before considering what solution can be supported by progressive people there is one other matter to be considered. The Zionist argument that the creation of a Jewish State is essential to the solution of the problems of world Jewry cannot be accepted. This problem will only be solved to the extent that Jews in each country take an

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

active part as equal citizens in the struggle for true economic and political democracy in their own country, such as the Jews have already achieved in the Soviet Union. The 8,000,000 Jews forming communities within a variety of countries outside the Soviet Union will not be able to overcome the problems created by the ruling class use of anti-semitism and racial discrimination to confuse the ranks of the democratic forces by the creation of a Jewish State. It is significant that of the one and a half million surviving Jews in Europe, despite all the horrors of the last years, large numbers are already reconstructing their synagogues and their schools, and recreating Jewish communities in their own countries with the aid, particularly in Eastern Europe, of the new democratic governments that have been born out of the common fight against fascism.

It must obviously be true that as an immediate reaction to the horrors of Nazi persecution, it is no easy matter for a Jew to wish to stay in a land where anti-semitism has bitten deep, and the special problem of those of the 100,000 displaced Jews in Germany who, after a period of rehabilitation, do not wish to return to their own countries will require a special solution, but this does not justify the Zionist claims.

What, then, is the solution for Palestine? It is not a question of for or against the 1939 White Paper, which never could solve the problem. Nor can partition do other than place a small Jewish population in a land (which is economically untenable) in a sea of hostile Arab States, to act as a buffer for British interests on the Mediterranean seaboard.

Palestine has been treated as a colony and the Arab struggle for independence must claim the support of progressive people everywhere. In the resolution on Palestine adopted by the 18th Congress of the Communist Party it stated that "a just and democratic settlement of the problem of Palestine can only be achieved by the abolition of the Mandate and the recognition of the national independence of Palestine under a democratic regime which assures freedom and equal rights to Arabs and Jews. A free and independent Palestine is the only condition in which full Arab-Jewish unity will flourish." It will be no easy matter to achieve this Arab-Jewish unity, but there is a growing realisation among both Jews and Arabs that a common understanding must be reached.

In the Jewish community the social issues are coming to the fore and there is a sharpening conflict between the leading Zionists, who are increasingly identified with the Jewish bourgeoisie and are willing tools of British imperialism, and the rest of the Jewish community. In addition to the Magnes Group, a small but growing left wing in the Histadruth and in wider circles of the community is calling for collaboration with the Arabs. While there is still a common demand in the Jewish community for the abrogation of the White Paper and for unrestricted immigration, there is every reason to hope that the necessity for achieving agreement with the Arabs on this issue will soon be voiced more prominently.

In the Arab community, where in the past the Nationalist Movement has been dominated by the feudalists and big landowners, there is a new spirit. The conflict of interest between worker, landless peasant and small farmer against the absentee landlords becomes sharper. The National Liberation League reflects these new forces that have developed in the Nationalist Movement in the course of the war and which must be seen as a progressive feature in the developing situation in the Middle East. The formation of Arab trade unions willing to co-operate with Jewish trade unions

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is significant. The fact that, on a small scale as yet, Jewish and Arab workers have been jointly engaged on economic issues especially in Government enterprises is a pointer. The existence of an Arab left wing that recognises the rights of the Jewish community and sees the Jews as common partners in the future development of Palestine is a sign of hope.

This development may be slow, but it must be assisted by the encouragement of all possible joint action on the economic issues; by pursuing a common policy aimed at removing the Arab fear of Jewish economic domination; by activity particularly within the Yishuv to end the Zionist policy of excluding non-Jewish labour from Jewish industry and agriculture, to ensure a more even development of Arab and Jewish industry; by encouraging joint action to end the present police regime and for democratic elections to local authorities; by bringing pressure on the Government to place the higher organs of government under more representative control.

The British Government itself should take the lead in securing this collaboration, going beyond the circles of official Zionism and Arab League leaders to secure this. It would then be reasonable to hope that both Arabs and Jews in Palestine will be able to agree that the Jews in Palestine should be free to receive some of the displaced Jews in Europe. The question of any further immigration must be subject to Arab-Jewish agreement. But the Arabs must recognise the Jewish community in Palestine is entitled as a community to live in peace, to develop their culture and way of life as a firm part of the peoples of Palestine.

The Jews in Palestine must abandon the Zionist conception of continued Jewish immigration until a Jewish majority can impose a Jewish State on an unwilling Arab minority.

It is important that those in the Arab and Jewish communities who are ready to agree on this line of solution should resolve any differences that prevent their uniting in a common organisation to secure these aims.

A joint Arab-Jewish State will not be built so long as Palestine remains a preserve of British imperialism or a cockpit of imperialist rivalry. Palestine is part of the Middle East, and its peaceful development cannot be separated from that of the neighbouring countries. This cannot be secured on the basis of Anglo-American agreement alone and the co-operation of all the United Nations will have to be sought. The U.N.O. should be able to bring its powerful influence to bear to assist the Arabs and Jews to achieve agreement. Bevin's proposal of an Anglo-American Commission will not solve the problem.

The Labour Party has in the past accepted the Zionist policy, and failed to see the imperialist character of the conflict in Palestine. This policy will have to be reconsidered. If the Jews in Palestine are to be helped to win a secure future for their community and at the same time to live in harmony with the Arab community that will be freed from imperialist oppression, a solution will have to be sought along these lines.

Good wishes for 1946 to all readers at home and abroad

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Book Reviews

Welcome Revival

The Modern Quarterly. New Series, Vol. I, No. 1, December, 1945 (Lawrence & Wishart, 2s6d).

ALL INTERESTED in Marxism and philosophical questions will heartily welcome the reappearance of the *Modern Quarterly* under the able editorship of Dr. John Lewis. Originally begun in 1938 and 1939, it became a war casualty. Now it reappears in an excellent and attractive format, with a wealth of thick paper, large type and ample spacing which should make the starved and eyesore reader of a microscopic LABOUR MONTHLY green (or, should we say, blue?) with envious admiration. With 100 pages, including photographic reproductions, it is striking value for half a crown.

The enormous increase of interest in all questions of Marxism and of the Marxist outlook in all fields of thought and culture, no less than the urgent need to extend original Marxist research, criticism, and discussion in all these fields, in relation to modern problems and schools of thought, makes this reappearance especially timely. As the editor justly says:—

> "Social and political conflicts are reaching a new intensity, and this is reflected in the conflict of ideas. We do not always remember that it is on the plane of philosophy as well as politics that the struggles of our time must be fought out. . . . .
>
> "Almost every significant reactionary trend of thought has today its literary medium of expression; progressive thought has been handicapped in this respect. The *Modern Quarterly* will do what it can to remedy this lack."

The range is catholic and not confined to any rigid Marxist basis. Indeed, the editorial introduction appears to hover between two alternative positions. On the one hand, it declares:

> "Our own thinking is insecurely based."

And again

> "It is in philosophy itself that the intellectual root of much of our scepticism rests."

On the other hand, it declares:

> "We need to engage in a vigorous polemic along the whole line."

It may be presumed that the "we" of the first two extracts is intended to describe the intellectual atmosphere of the non-Marxist world, while the "we" of the last extract is intended to express the editorial line of the journal. It is obvious that "a vigorous polemic" can only proceed from the basis of a clearly defined position, and not from thinking which is "insecurely based."

The first number contains a reprint of Professor Haldane's address to the P.E.N. club in June, 1944, on "Intellectual Liberty and Spiritual Values," which alone is worth the price of the journal. The address is incisive, hard-hitting, with all the inimitable liveliness of J.B.S., a model of Marxist polemic. There follows an article by a university economic lecturer, G. D. N. Worswick, on "'Modern Economic' and Politics," expounding the "modern economic" of the Keynes school (no longer so "modern," since it is already fifteen years old and well established as the current fashionable Whig orthodoxy in the seats of the mighty, as against the Jacobite fronde conducted by the Hayek-Mises school on behalf of reaction). The writer, starting from the premise that "economic propositions are concerned with the relation between quantities" (a definition of arithmetic?), and accepting Mrs. Robinson's familiar view that "no point of substance in Marx's argument depends upon the labour theory of value", urges that "'modern' economics fills a most important gap in socialist strategy." This article will, at any rate, stimulate controversy. Professor Bernal, in *Belief and Action*, expresses the outlook of a foremost modern scientist who accepts the basis of Marxism. Two of the most interesting articles in the number are occupied with the literary and artistic field: one, on the origin of the Negro spirituals, carries out a fruitful piece of research on their social background; the other subjects to critical examination the comparison often drawn between the art of early socialist civilisation (contemporary Soviet art) and that of the still ascending phase of the triumphant industrial bourgeoisie (Victorian art).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Future numbers of this magazine will be eagerly awaited. There is a host of problems waiting to be satisfactorily tackled from a Marxist standpoint in every field of contemporary theory and discussion; and it is to be hoped that the existence of this public medium of expression will stimulate the efforts of younger Marxist theorists in Britain to win their spurs and help to build up a strong, competent and creative school of Marxist thought in this country.

One small suggestion. It would be useful if in future numbers a note on contributors could be added.

R. P. D.

Memory of the Means Test

I Was One of the Unemployed by Max Cohen (Victor Gollancz, 7*s*6*d*).

DURING THE inter-war years, when I was organising the great agitations of the unemployed, the tragedy of the young unemployed workers always deeply impressed me. When the Means Test was imposed in 1931 the tragedy deepened. Tens of thousands of young single persons were refused insurance benefit and became entirely dependent for their keep on the earnings of brothers and sisters. Many happy families were thereby broken up because those who were unemployed refused to become a burden on their relatives.

Max Cohen was one of those young workers who tasted the full bitterness of unemployment and the Means Test. In his book he describrs his experiences in moving terms. It is a poignant account which brings home to the reader the mental anguish and suffering which he and thousands of others like him went through in those dark days of economic depression.

It is not a statistical document or a mere recitation of sombre events. It is a great human story; a story of aspiration and frustration, hopes and despairs, social inequalities, the inhumanity of officialdom, ironic humour and tragedy. We are allowed to look into the mind of one who, by economic conditions, is made to feel that he is a social outcast—not alone, but one of a huge army of mortals who are all afflicted with the same social blight.

Max Cohen writes in an intimate and interesting style which grips the reader's attention to the end. I recommend everybody to read this book so that their conscience will direct them in this post-war period to fight against any policy which leads to a return to unemployment and the evil conditions which accompany it.

WAL HANNINGTON.

Publications Received

BOOKS

The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups by W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole (Yale University Press (O.U.P.), 26*s*6*d*, 318 pp.).

Social Thinking by Prof. Hyman Levy (Cobbet Press) (Lawrence & Wishart,) 7*s*6*d*, 174 pp.).

France is Divided by Jean Dorgot (Frederick Muller Ltd., 8*s*6*d*, 238 pp.).

The Life and Teachings of Frederick Engels by Zelda K. Coates (Laurence & Wishart, 4*s*, 100 pp.).

Ten Essays on the French Revolution (Laurence & Wishart, 7*s*6*d*, 212 pp.).

Mainly about Books by Ernie Trory (The Acorn Press, 7*s*6*d*, 118 pp.).

PAMPHLETS

Soviet Youth Marches Forward (*Soviet News*, 1*s*, 48 pp.).

Corn on the Cob, Selected by A. L. Lloyd (Fore Publications Ltd., 3*s*6*d*, 66 pp.).

Land Policies by F. C. R. Douglas (United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values Ltd., 6*d*, 20 pp.).

Immigration and the White Australian Policy by R. Dixon (Australian C.P., 3*d*, 16 pp.).

A Free World by R. Dixon and L. L. Sharkey (Australian C.P., 6*d*, 32 pp.).

Indonesian Introduction by Gerald Peel, M.A. (Current Book Distributors, Sydney, 6*d*, 32 pp.).

Labour in Local Affairs (L.R.D., 6*d*, 16 pp.).

Legal Rights of the Soviet Family by G. M. Sverdlov (*Soviet Weekly*, 1*s*, 56 pp.).

Russia Has a Plan by A. Kursky (*Soviet Weekly*, 1*s*, 48 pp.).

How the Soviet Citizen Pays his Taxes by Professor M. I. Bogolepov (*Soviet Weekly*, 1*s*, 48 pp.).

PENGUIN BOOKS

Persons and Periods by G. D. H. Cole (9*d*, 174 pp., Pelican).

Russian Review (1) (1*s*, 144 pp., Penguin).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LABOUR MONTHLY GUARANTEE FUND

Amount received in December, 1945 : £64 : 10 : 9

A WORTH-WHILE INVESTMENT

Once again this month the Fund is below the danger-line, but once again we can see from the length of the list below that our readers have not forgotten us. What, then, is the reason for this drop? Firstly, with the stopping of overtime, wages are decreasing: then, in this first peace-time Christmas, we all want to celebrate, if only in a small way—and presents and celebrations cost money. How, then, are we to find money for such "extras" as the L.M. Fund?

A sailor has found the solution . . . this is what he says:- "I am being demobbed next week and will take care of my contribution. In preparing our weekly budget, my wife and I have, along with fixed expenses such as rent and insurance, made an allowance for L.M. as a worth-while 'investment.' While in the Navy I found the L.M. the most comprehensive political guide and I know that now the 'Battle for Peace' is on, I shall find the L.M. an invaluable guide to the practical part I hope to play in winning the peace."

WILL YOU HELP US BY INCLUDING THE LABOUR MONTHLY FUND IN YOUR BUDGET?

WE NEED £100 PER MONTH MINIMUM.

	£	s.	d.
M. Kirkman		7	0
F. Phillips		3	0
J.A.W.		14	0
S. Taylo		13	0
F. Reno		2	6
G. Parke		3	0
O.E.U.		14	0
Morey		10	0
M. Wood		3	0
A. Wall		5	0
P. Mayer		12	6
H. Sloan		3	0
G. Burleigh		3	0
R.G.U.R.A.C. ...		10	0
D. Ellward		3	0
L. Barnes		14	0
S. Blattner		4	0
J. Courcout		3	0
J. Revell		13	0
F. Browne		1	0
D. W. Smith ...		3	0
D. Brenner		7	0
A. Ireland		3	0
H. Horinsky ...		3	0
J. Nathan		13	0
H. Millar		3	0
L. Heywood		3	0
J. Pound		3	0
H. Knight		3	0
Radio Mechanic R.E.M.E.		10	0
J. W. Turner ...		4	0
D. Rees		10	0
J. E. Brown		6	0
D. Gardner		3	0
W. Burbridge ...		2	6
Lower Morden D.G.		2	6
Mr. & Mrs. Humphreys		2	6
W. H. Griffiths ...		2	6
W. Lakin-Smith ...		6	0
Learner		2	0
C. Levy	2	0	0
Director	2	0	0
C. Wrench		5	0
H. L. Davies ...		15	0
C. Kormos		3	0
E. Edwards		7	0
Anon.		2	0
V.A.D.		5	0
A. M. Bloch	1	4	6
S. H. Moore		3	0
J. Pack		3	0
M. H. Price		3	0
Socialist Sailor ...	2	10	0
R.R.R.	1	0	0
P.T.C.		5	0
C. Meldon		3	0
H.S.M.		2	6
Western Australian ...		12	0
Old Age Pensioner ...		2	6
E. Rogers		14	0
Anon, Whitchurch ...		1	0
W. Taylor		3	0
C. Burr		3	0
L'Humanite		2	0
L. MacGregor ...	1	15	0
B. G. Stevens ...		2	6
D. Halpern		7	0
F. Gough		7	0
T. Dewhurst ...		14	0
Forces per D.A.H. ...	1	3	0
S. Mill		10	0
H.E.C.		13	0
F. Stehr		5	0
J.B.		10	0
Eight of the Boys ...		10	0
E. Shepheard ...		3	6
Anonymous		3	6
V. Pearson		2	6
G. E. & M. Philibert		10	0
J. Scott		2	6
J. McQueen		3	0
M. Hodds		3	0
R. Hart		10	0
L. Clark		7	0
J. A. Smith		2	6
D. Gardner		2	0
E. D. McCallum ...		2	6
Mr. & Mrs. Humphreys		2	6
H. Levitt	1	10	0
Mr. & Mrs. Padel ...	1	0	0
D. Palmer		7	0
E. Roberts		3	0
H. Martyn Green ...	2	0	0
A. E. Giebler ...		13	0
H. S. Day		5	6
J. R. Edwards ...		2	6
H.A.B.	5	0	0
R. Gray	1	0	0
J. Simpson		13	0
S. G. Nowell ...		1	6
K. A. Hill		3	0
V. Smith		10	0
K.M.G. Ex-Rhodesia		2	6
G. R. Clark ...		5	0
E. Dixon		1	6
D. H. Strathern & Friends ...		9	0
R. C. Hancock ...		3	0
F.M.R.		1	3
A. R. Watson ...		13	0
R.F.B.	3	[illegible]	6
J. Cave		3	0
J. Rees		3	0
K. Gillanders ...		2	6
W. Ellison		3	0
R. A. Ward		5	0
R.R.R.	1	0	0
J. Purton	1	0	0
M.H.		5	0
H. Criddle	4	13	0
G. M. Driver ...	1	0	0
G. Hill		3	0
T.W.R.	1	0	0
W. Scobell		13	0
M. Schaffer		2	6
G. Robson		5	0
E. Wynburne ...		3	0
J. Fernandez ...		12	0

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COBBETT PRESS

Published December 14th

LANGUAGE of MEN

A. L. Morton *7s. 6d.*

A book of Essays by the Author of A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND

2 Southampton Place, W.C.1

B.Sc. ECON.

Men and women who wish to prepare for post-war opportunities should obtain the London University B.Sc. Econ. degree. It is a valuable qualification not only for teaching or administrative posts under Education authorities, but also for statistical research and welfare work in commerce, industry, and T.U. organisation. The degree is open to all. Prepare for it at home under the experienced guidance of Wolsey Hall; tuition fees may be paid by instalments. At the 1945 (External) Exam. 36 out of 48 W. H. Students Passed, 21 in Honours.

Prospectus post free from C. D. Parker, M.A., LL.D., Director of Studies, Dept. JK17,

WOLSEY HALL, OXFORD

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

by

WILLIAM GALLACHER, M.P.

PRICE 3d.

NOW ON SALE

Order from your bookshop or from LABOUR MONTHLY, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

Published by the Proprietors, The Trinity Trust, 134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3, and printed by Evans, Spencer & Co. Ltd., London, E.C.4. in the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED